Today, by a vote of 368 to 58, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1268, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005. Rep. Jesse L. Jackson, Jr., led efforts to increase funding in the bill to alleviate suffering in the Darfur region of Sudan and other African countries.

The final version of the bill includes $240 million for emergency food aid for the Darfur region of Sudan and other parts of Africa; $90 million for disaster assistance, of which $40 million is for Darfur, and $50 million for Ethiopia, Liberia, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo; $120.4 million for refugee assistance, including $53.4 million going to Sudan, and $41 million for other African countries. The bill also includes a provision allowing up to $50 million to be spent for African Union peacekeeping troops in Darfur.

"Literally, thousands of people are dying every day in these nations. So much of the havoc and destruction in Sudan and elsewhere in Africa is caused by disease and malnutrition, which can be mitigated with our help. We have the moral duty to address this urgent need for aid in Sub-Saharan Africa." Jackson said.

The bill is expected to be passed by the Senate next week, and will then go to the President for his signature.

Congressman Jesse L. Jackson, Jr., a steadfast supporter of African aid, introduced and passed a $250 million amendment during the House's consideration of the spending bill. The Jackson amendment restored $150 million in House Republican cuts in emergency food aid, and increased disaster and refugee assistance by $100 million. In the Senate, Senators Brownback (R-KS), DeWine (R-OH) and Leahy (D-VT) added an additional $200 million to these accounts plus the $50 million peacekeeping provision.

Congressman Jackson has served on the House Appropriations Committee for six years. He currently sits on the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs, which funds disaster aid and refugee assistance.